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whole of about the height of the ordinary style. The plate-like style is about one-half an inch square and ridged upwards, all its edges being perfectly entire.

The ovary is of the same diameter as that of the normal flower, but is about three-quarters of an inch long, and contains about 30 cells in two rows horizontally on the torus. The ovules are to all appearances quite ordinary in general aspect.

During the spring of the same year another case of fasciation was found on the same hill in a specimen of *Claytonia virginica*, L. Three or four flowers seemed to have grown together into one, and only one such flower was found in the cluster.

III. ABNORMAL SPECIMENS OF DANDELION.

The following communication was received from Mr. E. W. Bowditch, of Boston, in reference to the article in the April number of the Midland Naturalist. With the permission of the writer the letter is here reproduced in full, as it may be of interest to our readers:

EDITOR MIDLAND NATURALIST,
Notre Dame, Indiana.

DEAR SIR:

My attention has been called to pages 24, 25 and 26 of the April number of the Midland Naturalist where is shown an abnormal specimen of the common dandelion (Taraxacum officinale) with a statement, etc., of its occurrence over a limited area of a highly fertilized lawn.

If Prof Kirsch could travel from Utica to Binghamton, N. Y., by rail, at the season when the dandelion is in blossom, he would probably see a sight he never would forget.

At Hamilton, N. Y., where the writer has noticed the abnormal growth more in detail than elsewhere, it may be stated that acres upon acres of ground show the same peculiarity—not always to the same extent as shown in the illustration in the Midland Naturalist but there would be no trouble in collecting literally bushels of the plant showing abnormal growth on the grounds of Colgate University alone. No specimens were found having more than ten heads united.

From the fact that in places between Hamilton and Utica the railroad banks (fill) will be seen almost a solid blaze of yellow—when the blossoms are in their prime, and from the fact that most of the University grounds have never been treated to a thorough manuring, or kept as lawns, it may be questioned whether the growth is due to extraordinary fertilization, or to natural causes—Hamilton is comparatively high in altitude, the brooks are all strongly impregnated with lime and through the meadows where the dandelions show the best, the soil which is quite stony, is several feet deep.

Between Hamilton and Binghamton, the show of color from the car windows is extraordinary, and though I am not familiar with much of the country except from car windows, the fact that the railroad fills, which are preferably not made with rich soil,* literally blaze with color, would incline me to believe some other reason than rich soil might be responsible for the phenomenon.

Yours very truly,

ERNEST W. BOWDITCH.

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* Editor's Note. Since the publication of Prof. Kirsch's article we have found four or five cases of fasciation of dandelion. Usually not more than three or four heads were united, and the plants were in every instance found in very unfavorable conditions such as are indicated by Mr. Bowditch. One plant was found on gravelly soil on the edge of a cement sidewalk and the others coming up from an old cinder path. Another plant on the edge of a gravel walk had as many as eleven heads combined. It has been observed that very old clover plants are more apt to have more than the normal number of blades to the leaf. Such plants have been found to have more 4, 5 and 6-bladed leaves than 3-bladed ones. Might not age also have some influence on formation of abnormal growth?

Editorial Note.

"SPINELESS CACTI."

In the course of a conversation with a representative of one of the European governments we discussed the subject of the "spineless cactus." As scientific expert attached to a consulate the gentleman had been deputed by his government to investigate these spineless forms with the object of later securing such for the tropical colonies. Before, however, his report was sent in a purchase had been affected by the authorities at home. His report was not very favorable we were told, for the "spineless cacti" developed the unfortunate tendency of reverting to their primitive and ordinary spiny condition. In fact he came to the conclusion that at present the best way of easily and surely obtaining "spineless cacti" for fodder for cattle is to have a laborer go from plant to plant and burn off the spines with an ordinary oil-blast lamp.

In view of this it would seem that spineless forms of Opuntia are still far from immutable, and that very little reliance can be put on the glowing accounts of scientific discoveries as related in the